

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Cuba demands end to hostile
U.S. immigration policies**

— PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 79/NO. 46 DECEMBER 21, 2015

Contraction in production grinds away on workers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

“Robust Jobs Report All But Guarantees Fed Will Raise Rates,” headlined the *New York Times*, describing the Labor Department’s November report that official unemployment is holding at 5 percent. “November Jobs Report Points to U.S. Economy’s Health,” echoed the *Atlantic*.

But for the working class, the reality is grinding depression conditions. Factory production is contracting, real wages are stagnant, millions are unemployed, many working people can only get part-time or temporary work, and bosses are demanding two-tier wage deals in steel, auto and other basic industry. These conditions are rooted in the ongoing capitalist economic crisis marked by declining production and trade worldwide.

In November U.S. factory production fell to its lowest level since June 2009, the first month the economy began a “recovery” after a 16-month steep economic downturn. New factory orders dropped to their lowest level in three years and inventories contracted for the fifth straight month.

U.S. exports have declined for the last six months and in October they fell to the lowest level in three years. Orders for trucks designed to trans-

Continued on page 6

Chicago actions protest cop killings, cover-up

Justice Dept. announces probe of city police



Militant/Alyson Kennedy

Arrest of cop who killed Laquan McDonald and firing of police chief have not stopped protests as city is forced to release videos showing more cop killings. Above, Dec. 6 march of 400.

BY JOHN HAWKINS
AND ALYSON KENNEDY

CHICAGO — More than 400 demonstrators chanting “16 shots and a cover-up” marched here Dec. 6 as part of almost daily protests against the police killing of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald, efforts of other cops at the scene to falsify their accounts and the city government’s fight to cover up the killing.

McDonald was shot and killed Oct. 20, 2014, by Chicago cop Jason Van Dyke. Video footage shows McDon-

ald walking away when Van Dyke shot him 16 times, 14 when he was already lying on the ground. Van Dyke was arrested and charged with first-degree murder Nov. 24, more than a year after the killing.

Under pressure from the wave of protests, the city has released addi-

Continued on page 9

US, Paris use terror attacks to go after Muslims

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Dec. 2 terror attack that left 14 dead in San Bernardino, California, coming nearly three weeks after the murderous assaults in Paris by reactionary Islamic State that killed 130 people, are being used by Washington, Paris and other imperialist powers to target Muslims and mosques and step up war moves in Syria and Iraq.

In a special TV address Dec. 6, President Barack Obama proposed barring anyone on Washington’s arbitrary and undemocratic “no-fly” lists from purchasing guns and called for more intrusive background checks for people entering the U.S.

Following the San Bernardino killings, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump called for banning all Muslims who are not U.S. citizens from entering the United States and for creating a registry of Muslims who live here. Facing criticism from other presidential candidates, he argued the plan is similar to proclamations issued by President

Continued on page 4

Tatars block supplies to Crimea, cause shortages of food, necessities



Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev speaking at Sept. 20 launch of blockade of Crimea. Tatars have waged long-standing battle against national oppression at hands of Moscow.

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Working people in Moscow-occupied Crimea have faced growing shortages of food and other necessities from a blockade on the Ukrainian side of the peninsula’s border initiated by Crimean Tatars there. The effects

were greatly magnified when explosions on Nov. 20 and 21 cut electricity for most of Crimea’s 2 million residents.

The blockade was initiated by leaders of the Mejlis, the Tatar parliament,

Continued on page 6

Attacks on right to free speech are blow to the working class

BY MAGGIE TROWE

A growing trend among academics, students, liberals and some who call themselves socialists is to threaten and shout down those with whom they disagree. This is an attack on precious political rights won in hard-fought struggles by working people and must be vigorously opposed.

COMMENTARY

Some students have tried to bar talks and performances by Israeli academics and artists, and those who hold differing views on Israel. At a recent protest at Hunter College against tuition and for cancelling student debts, one group, saying the problem was “Zionist” administrators, tried to drive off four Jewish students who joined with signs backing the action that also supported the existence of Israel.

During recent student protests carried out under the banner of the fight against racism at the University of Missouri, Yale, Cornell and other campuses, the right to free speech became the target, instead of putting forward clear demands to overturn policies that discriminate against

Blacks and forge unity in action.

On Nov. 9 when student photojournalist Tim Tai visited a University of Missouri at Columbia public protest calling for more racial awareness, some students told him he couldn’t take pictures because the protest area was their “safe space.” Tai replied that the right to protest and his right to report on the protests were protected by the Constitution, and another journalist supported him. Melissa Click, an

Continued on page 9

Inside

Editorial: Fight cop brutality, defend free speech! 9

Rail workers in Quebec win support against gov’t frame-up 2

‘New International’ magazine’ is online at themilitant.com! 2

SWP fights against rulers’ scapegoating of Muslims 3

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Walmart workers in California, NY and Washington fight firings

‘New International’ magazine is online at themilitant.com!

BY HARVEY MCARTHUR

Workers and youth involved in labor battles, the fight for a \$15 minimum wage and a union, struggles against police brutality and other fights can now find online and download political lessons from *New International* magazine.

The magazine of Marxist politics contains articles, polemics and reports by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the world communist movement. This wealth of political material — published over more than 80 years — is now available through links on the home page of the *Militant* (www.themilitant.com), as well as Pathfinder Press (www.pathfinderpress.com).

Writings and speeches by SWP leaders James P. Cannon, Farrell Dobbs, Joseph Hansen, George Novack, Evelyn Reed, Jack Barnes, and Mary-Alice Waters are available; by Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, and Nelson Mandela; and by pioneers of the international working-class movement from Karl Marx and Frederick Engels to V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky.

From its first issue in 1934, the SWP’s magazine has featured discussion and debates on building communist parties in the U.S. and worldwide, on the fight for workers power and socialism and on political lessons from revolutionary struggles in Russia, Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, Iran, Algeria, China and beyond.

The first 40 years, through 1975, are now indexed and online, as are

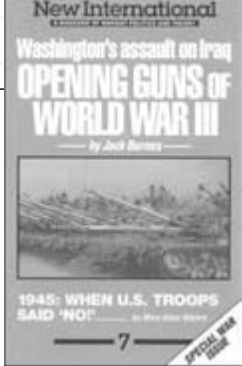
issues from 1982 to 1998. Those up to the most recent issue will be posted by early 2016, and remaining issues will be added as they are indexed. There are subject and author indexes, an index search page and other features to help you find what you’re looking for.

This online tool was made possible through work by volunteers actively engaged in advancing the Socialist Workers Party’s political and union activity.

They scanned old printed issues, created the index, and maintain the websites. Put it to good use!

New International		Subject Index	
A JOURNAL OF MARXIST POLITICAL ECONOMY		Subjects	Authors
Issue		Issue-by-Issue	Search
Select Subject from List Below		Click title below to view article on line	
Agriculture (see Workers' and Farmers' Alliance categories)		International Socialist Review	42 "Frantz Fanon" [Book Review] by Alan Waid
Albania		International Socialist Review	33 "Ahmed Ben Bella" [Book Review] by Will Reiserer
Algeria		International Socialist Review	17 The Progress and Problems of the African Revolution by 1965 International World Congress
Algeria: Opposition to War (see France: (1954-52), Struggle Against Algerian War)		International Socialist Review	24 The Manifesto of the 121 by Jean Paul Serre
Algeria: Revolution, 1954-65		International Socialist Review	29 Algerian Realities? [Book Review] by Lilian Kezel
Alienation (see Marxist Theory: Alienation)			
American Indians (see Native Americans: U.S.)			

New International and its predecessors are invaluable tools for working-class fighters today. A search for information on Algerian Revolution leads to “Manifesto of the 121” in Winter 1961 *International Socialist Review*. Workers wanting accurate information on Washington’s brutal 1991 Gulf War and its political impact can access “Opening Guns of World War III” by Jack Barnes.



Rail workers in Quebec win support against gov’t frame-up

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

LAC-MÉGANTIC, Quebec — A court here Dec. 1 postponed making any decisions and set an April 4 hearing to hear pretrial motions in the Canadian government’s frame-up case against locomotive engineer Tom Harding and train controller Richard Labrie, members of the Steelworkers union. Along with former company manager Jean Demaitre, the two rail unionists face possible life in prison on 47 counts of criminal negligence causing death. All three have pled not guilty.

The trumped-up charges are part of efforts by the government and rail bosses to scapegoat the workers for the July 6, 2013, derailment and explosion of a 72-car Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway oil train in Lac-

Mégantic that killed 47 people.

Harding, the only crew on the train because of a special dispensation from Transport Canada to protect the company’s profits, parked the train in Nantes, uphill from Lac-Mégantic, with the engine running to power the air brakes and setting a number of handbrakes, per company practice. After he left a fire broke out on the engine, and firemen turned it off. A company official said everything was OK.

When the brakes ran down, the train rolled and derailed in downtown Lac-Mégantic.

Several members of the Citizens and Community Groups Rail Safety Coalition, which organized the Oct. 11 March for Rail Safety of almost 1,000 people here, came to the hearing to demonstrate solidarity with Harding and Labrie. “It’s not them, but government and company officials who are responsible,” André Lachapelle of the Sécu-Rail Committee told the *Militant* in an interview before the hearing.

Christiane Filteau, Demaitre’s lawyer, announced that she would propose that the trial be moved out of Lac-Mégantic, arguing it isn’t possible to get a fair trial in the town of 6,000 because almost everyone was touched by the 2013 disaster.

Thomas Walsh, Harding’s lawyer, told the judge his client wants to be judged “here in Lac-Mégantic.”

Many in the town believe Harding shouldn’t be on trial at all. “It’s not Harding and Labrie who are guilty, but the company officials in Boston and officials in the Ministry of Transport that should be charged,” Jacques Breton, mayor of Nantes, told the *Militant* the night before the hearing.

Breton works at the Bestar furniture manufacturing plant in Lac-Mégantic and was recently elected president of the Unifor Local 299 union at the plant. He served as a marshal at the Oct. 11 demonstration.

“Tom Harding is a hero; he risked his life that night. It’s not right he be made a scapegoat for the tragedy,” Elisabeth Rodrique told the *Militant*. She and her husband Marc own and operate a small motel in Woburn, a town of 700 people 20 miles south of Lac-Mégantic. “Harding and Labrie deserve support.”

Last spring the prosecution decided to go directly to a trial without the usual preliminary hearing, depriving the defense the opportunity to hear the government’s basis for their charges. “I plan to petition the court to make the crown state its case,” Walsh said. “All parties are interested in knowing

Continued on page 5

THE MILITANT

Unite the working class, no to two-tier pay!

Workers on strike at Kohler Co. in Wisconsin are setting an example by standing up to the divisive two-tier wage system bosses have foisted on workers in a growing number of industries. The ‘Militant’ gets out the facts about their fight and other labor battles.



Militant/Dan Fein
Strikers picket Nov. 28 in Kohler, Wisconsin.

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Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*’s views. These are expressed in editorials.

SWP fights against rulers' scapegoating of Muslims

BY NAOMI CRAINE

In face of the campaign smearing and targeting Muslims by capitalist politicians and media, the Socialist Workers Party and its sister Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom are campaigning to protest increased acts of violence and vandalism, and tell the truth about the rulers' drive to gut the political rights of all working people. It's a key part of campaigning against the stepped-up war drive by the imperialist rulers from Washington to Paris and London.

"About 100 people took part in the Dec. 5 Unity Walk in Falls Church, Virginia, to protest the planting of a fake bomb at the Dar Al-Hijrah mosque," wrote Glova Scott from Washington, D.C. Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party joined the action, which included a march to the mosque from a nearby church. Organizers also collected coats and blankets for refugees from Syria and Iraq, who have been a political target of the anti-Muslim campaign.

"It's hard enough to find a job even without the hijab, with it it's even harder," Maubouba Riahi, originally from Tunisia, told Arrin Hawkins. She commented on the prejudice Muslims face, saying, "A few people have shouted at me to go back home." Riahi's daughter is a member of the Muslim Student Association at J.E.B. Stuart High School in Falls Church. The group meets at the mosque and has been fighting to change the name of the school, which is taken after a prominent Confederate general.

Riahi subscribed to the *Militant* and five others bought copies to learn more about the party and its campaigns.

Jonathan Silberman, Communist League candidate for mayor of London,

was among 250 participants in a Dec. 4 protest responding to an attempted arson attack on the Finsbury Park mosque. Many expressed opposition to London's decision to join the Washington-led coalition in carrying out airstrikes in Syria.

Communist workers also campaign in working-class communities, at strike picket lines and protests against police brutality, and anywhere else workers are debating what way forward.

"We went door to door in an apartment building in a Brooklyn neighborhood where workers from many different countries and religions live," Seth Galinsky reported from New York. "A worker originally from Bangladesh bought a subscription. Just to pay the rent he has to work both as a cab driver and in a restaurant. He said he agreed with those fighting for \$15 an hour, and that Muslims, Jews and Christians shouldn't fight each other."

"At another door, a woman who is from Israel disagreed with many things we said, but wanted to talk. When we said most Muslims don't like Islamic State she argued, 'Maybe so, but all terrorists are Muslims.' After our discussion, she got a copy of the *Militant*."

Supporters from Atlanta found interest in what the SWP had to say — and some debate — among the thousands attending a Nov. 30 rally for Republican



Inset: Militant/Dan Fein

Socialist Workers Party joined Dec. 5 Unity Walk in Falls Church, Virginia, after attack on mosque there. Inset, SWP member Leroy Watson, right, talks with Yassar Assaf at his doorstep in Bridgeview, Illinois, the same day.



presidential candidate Donald Trump in Macon, Georgia.

"Something has to be done about so many jobs being lost in the small towns," Joe West, a union electrician, told SWP member Janice Lynn, who responded that none of the Democratic and Republican candidates have a program to provide jobs. "That's why working people need to come together, organize unions and build a labor party to fight for the things we need." West gave Lynn \$5 for a *Militant* and said to keep the change.

A few people passed out a flyer demanding the Georgia legislature stop financing refugee resettlement, Rach-

ele Fruit reported. Others opposed the scapegoating of Muslims, some who were going in to hear Trump and others who came to protest against him.

"I'm not sure who I would vote for now," said Kimberly Greenway from St. Petersburg, Florida, who was selling buttons and T-shirts outside. "I believe that when you hurt a human being, no matter where, what color, race or size, you hurt yourself."

In all 25 people got copies of the *Militant* and one subscribed.

Join in the campaigning effort! Contact the party branch in your area, listed on page 8.

Calif. protest: 'Prison sleep deprivation is torture!'

BY BETSEY STONE

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — "Stop the torture! Let them sleep!" two dozen protesters chanted outside the offices of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

here Nov. 30.

Dozens of inmates held in solitary confinement at the Pelican Bay State Prison have filed complaints against guards waking them up every 30 minutes night and day in what prison authorities claim are safety checks to guard against suicides.

"It's torture when you can't sleep because of the nonstop banging of the metal doors, stomping by the guards, buzzers, and the guards shining a flashlight in your eyes two times an hour," inmate Akili Mims told the *Guardian* newspaper Sept. 25, seven weeks after the "checks" were implemented.

"They call it a 'wellness check,' but in fact it undermines health," said Anita Wills, one of the speakers at the protest. "It's part of trying to break down the humanity of the prisoners." Wills, who has a cousin and a son in prison, is active in the Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition, the group that sponsored the protest.

Inmates confined in Pelican Bay's notorious Security Housing Units — the majority of those incarcerated there — are held in windowless cells 23 hours a day.

Prison authorities claim the checks are required under a 1995 court order holding that medical care in California prisons was inadequate, handed down in a case filed by prisoners suffering from mental illness. Prison officials implemented the decision in 2006, but not at Pelican Bay until several months ago.

"Instead of taking care of the prisoners' health, they are doing the opposite," said Verbena Lea, who drove to the protest from Eureka, a town close to the Pelican Bay prison on the northern border with Oregon. Lea helped organize a similar protest outside the prison in September, where they held up a giant banner saying, "Sleep De-

privation is Torture."

"I think it's the prison system retaliating against prisoners in solitary confinement who supported the Ashker case," Dolores Canales, a leader of California Families Against Solitary Confinement, told the *Guardian*. The class action lawsuit was brought by Pelican Bay prisoners who led three hunger strikes, including one in 2013 of over 30,000 at its high point.

Initiated by Todd Ashker and Danny Troxell, the suit was settled in September. It ordered an end to officials throwing prisoners into solitary for indefinite periods of time by labeling them "gang affiliated."

"The settlement should be viewed as a victory we can build on in our protracted ongoing struggle to end long-term solitary confinement," Ashker said. He has been confined to the Pelican Bay SHU for over 20 years.

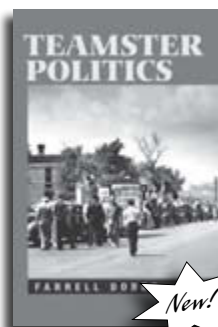
Another victory by a Pelican Bay prisoner who has been part of the fight against solitary confinement in California was scored Nov. 27 when Jesse Perez was awarded \$25,000 by a federal grand jury.

Perez, imprisoned since he was 15, took part in the prisoner hunger strikes and successfully challenged the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation in court for unfairly placing him in solitary. In retaliation, the guards destroyed his belongings, including his legal papers.

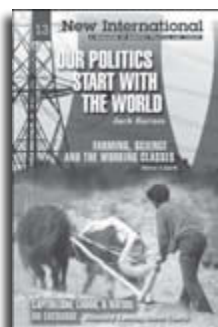
Perez wrote that he hoped to shine a public light on — and rein in — retaliatory actions activists have had to endure when they exercise their constitutional rights.

The Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition organizes protests on the 23rd of each month. For information visit: prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com

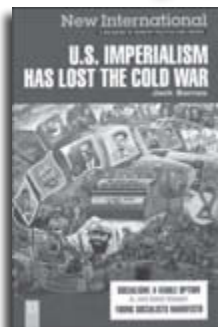
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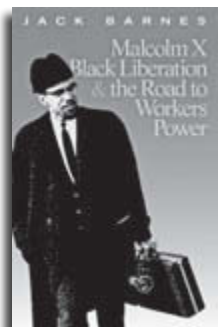
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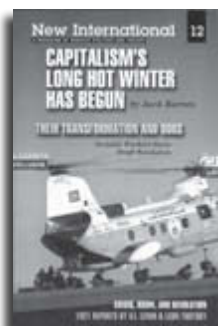
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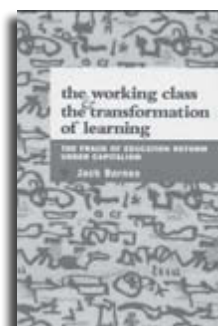
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If you subscribe or renew, these special offers are for you. Contact Socialist Workers Party or Communist League branches listed on page 8.

Attacks on Muslims

Continued from front page

Franklin Roosevelt that led to sending thousands of Japanese-Americans to concentration camps during the second imperialist world war.

His opponents advanced their own plans to scapegoat Muslims. Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, who polls say now leads Trump in Iowa, pushed his proposed Terrorist Refugee Infiltration Prevention Act that would ban all refugees from Syria and Iraq.

While denouncing Trump, Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton backed Obama's push to toss aside constitutional rights of those Washington has put on the no-fly list.

Arbitrary no-fly list

"No one knows how you get on the list or how to get off it, it's totally arbitrary and unconstitutional," James Harris, twice presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party, told the *Militant*. Harris found he was on the list for some five years when they started pulling him aside when he tried to fly. "You can get on the list because you're Muslim, because your name is similar to someone else they want to target, or all kinds of other reasons."

Republican candidate Ben Carson, whose poll numbers have been fading, said the U.S. shouldn't discriminate against people because of their religion, so it should require *everyone* visiting the U.S. to register and be monitored.

Since June 2014, when Islamic State began to take over parts of Iraq, Obama has sent 3,500 U.S. troops there. The Pentagon recently announced it is sending 100 more special forces troops — focused on "high-value individuals, high value targets" — to Iraq, as well as 50 others to Syria.

"When I said 'no boots on the ground,' I think the American people understood generally that we're not going to do an Iraq-style invasion of Iraq or Syria with battalions that are moving across the desert," Obama told CBS News Dec. 3, but not that he wouldn't send more troops.

The same day Secretary of State John Kerry told European ministers of state meeting in Belgrade, Serbia, that Washington and its allies need to "find some ground forces that are prepared to take on Daesh, this will not be won completely from the air." Daesh is an Arabic acronym for Islamic State.

In headlines across the country, the shootings in San Bernadino are labeled as the "biggest U.S. terror attack since 9/11." The propertied rulers aim to deepen anxiety and fear among working people and provide support for attacks on Muslims and political rights.

The FBI says that Syed Farook, a Pakistani-American citizen, and his wife Tashfeen Malik, who grew up in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and got a U.S. visa after she married Farook, prepared well in advance before walking into a holiday party in San Bernardino and opening fire with assault rifles. The agency says Malik posted a salute to Islamic State on Facebook as the attack began.

The rulers' campaign to scapegoat Muslims and attack political rights spawns brutal assaults. After being beaten in his Fatima Food Mart in Astoria, Queens, Dec. 5 by a man telling him "I'll kill Muslims," Sarker Haque was taken to the hospital bruised, bleeding and with a dislocated hand. "I thought I was going to die," he told the N.Y. Council on American-Islamic Relations.

In Philadelphia, the Al-Aqsa mosque was hit with a severed pig's head.

The *New York Times* ran an article Nov. 25 saying that border patrol agents and "some residents" are concerned that Ottawa's plans to accept 25,000 Syrian refugees in Canada are a threat to the United States. There are only 2,200 U.S. agents on the Canadian border, the longest shared land border in the world, the *Times* noted, compared to 18,000 on the border with Mexico.

In France, the government has extended through February 2016 the state of emergency it declared after the Paris attack and has used it to close three mosques and four Islamic prayer rooms, raid 2,200 homes and businesses, put 330 people under house arrest and detain most of the 263 people that they have taken in for questioning. French President Francois Hollande says he wants to amend the country's constitution to give the president expanded emergency powers.

Escalating war in Iraq and Syria

The U.S.-led military operation has bombed 5,639 targets in Iraq and 2,934 in Syria as of Dec. 1 in more than 59,000 air sorties since August 2014. Despite Washington's attempts to get its coalition partners to do more, 78 percent of the strikes have been carried out by U.S. forces.

On Dec. 2, just one hour after the British Parliament voted to join the imperialist campaign, Royal Air Force jets attacked oil infrastructure under Islamic State control in eastern Syria. The British military has committed 16 aircraft to the fight.

While Paris and London have signed

Baltimore: First cop on trial in killing of Freddie Gray



AP Photo/Alex Brandon

The trial of Baltimore cop William Porter, the first of six cops charged in the death of Freddie Gray, opened Dec. 2. Gray, a 25-year-old African-American, was arrested April 12 and taken away in a police van. While in custody he suffered a massive spinal cord injury and died a week later. His death sparked a mini-rebellion that won the indictment of the six cops involved. Above, protesters block streets in downtown Baltimore April 25.

Porter — who was allegedly present at five of six stops the van made while Gray was being transported — is charged with manslaughter, second-degree assault, misconduct in office and reckless endangerment. Prosecutors say Porter, in violation of protocol, did not call a medic when Gray requested one, nor did he secure Gray, who was handcuffed and shackled, with a seatbelt in the back of the van.

Porter's lawyers argue that the Baltimore Police Department is dysfunctional and does not provide proper training. Defense attorney Gary Proctor ended his opening argument by mocking a slogan popularized during protests following Gray's death, saying, "Let's show Baltimore the whole damn system is not guilty as hell."

After the hearing, protesters gathered outside a local police station chanting, "The whole damn system is guilty as hell."

— NAOMI CRAINE

on as junior partners in Washington's assaults, Obama looks for a grander coalition to achieve a political solution and pacify the region, protecting U.S. imperialist interests there.

"Doing so will allow the Syrian people and every country, including our allies, but also countries like Russia, to focus on the common goal of destroying ISIL, a group that threatens us all," he said in his Dec. 6 address.

But Moscow, Damascus, Ankara, Tehran, the Gulf monarchies, together with Washington and other imperialist powers all have conflicting interests, and the grand coalition proves elusive.

Meanwhile, Muslim workers and farmers are bearing the brunt of the bombings and assaults — by Islamic State, Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad's forces, Russia, Turkey and the imperialist coalition.

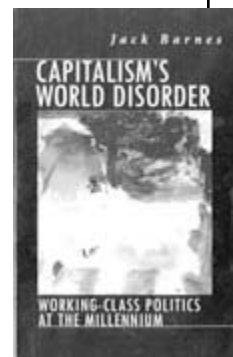
Moscow has also been accelerating its bombing runs in Syria, and has primarily targeted not Islamic State but other armed groups opposed to the Assad regime. The Russian planes are dropping mostly unguided bombs, with hundreds of civilian casualties. The U.S. "precision" strikes over the past year have also killed hundreds of civilians, according to Airwars, a group of independent journalists.

For further reading

Capitalism's World Disorder

Working-Class Politics at the Millennium by Jack Barnes

Social devastation and financial panic, coarsening of politics, cop brutality, and imperialist aggression — all are products not of something gone wrong with capitalism today but of its lawful workings. Yet the future can be changed by the united struggle of workers and farmers increasingly conscious of their capacity to wage revolutionary struggles for state power and to transform the world. \$25



The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions by Jack Barnes

Building the kind of party working people need to prepare for coming class battles through which they will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all society. A handbook for those seeking the road toward effective action to overturn the exploitative system of capitalism and join in reconstructing the world on new, socialist foundations. \$24



Available at locations listed on page 8, or at pathfinderpress.com

Celebrate the life and political contributions of

Frank Forrestal

35-year cadre and leader of the Socialist Workers Party

Speakers:

Norton Sandler, SWP National Committee;
John Studer, editor of the *Militant*; **Rafael Espinosa**, union representative, UFCW Local 1189; **Alyson Kennedy**, chair of Illinois SWP

Sunday, December 13

Reception 1 pm, Program 2 pm

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—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CANADA

Montreal

Support Quebec Public-Sector Workers Fighting Government Attacks on Their Wages and Working Conditions. No Cuts to Education, Health Care and Other Services Workers Need. Speaker: Beverly Bernardo, Communist League. Fri., Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St. Denis #204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

Help the *Militant* cover labor struggles across the country!

This column gives a voice to those engaged in battle and building solidarity today — including workers fighting for \$15 and a union; locked-out ATI Steelworkers; autoworkers on strike against Kohler; steel and Verizon workers opposing concessions. I invite those involved in workers' battles to contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

— Maggie Trowe

Walmart workers in California, NY and Washington fight firings

FEDERAL WAY, Wash. — Some 30 supporters of Mary Watkins, who was fired by Walmart here a few months ago, accompanied her into the store as she delivered 5,000 petition signatures to management Dec. 5 demanding she be reinstated. The manager told the delegation to leave, threatened to call the police but eventually accepted the petitions.

Watkins is a founding member of the workers group OUR Walmart and has twice been fired for her organizing activity. Participants in the protest included members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 21, the Socialist Workers Party, OUR Walmart and others.

"I won't be bullied, I won't be scared," Watkins told the *Militant*. "I will continue to fight for my job."

"We won't stand for intimidation or retaliation," said Pat Scott, who has worked at the store here for 17 years.

— John Naubert

ALBANY, N.Y. — Thomas Smith, 52, a worker at the Walmart store in nearby East Greenbush, was fired Nov. 6 for redeeming \$2 worth of empty cans left in a shopping cart in the entryway of the store. Smith was terminated for "gross misconduct," Walmart spokesperson Aaron Mullins told the *Albany Times Union*.

Smith, an African-American, has a good work record and has received a lot of support. This year's annual Black Friday protest, demanding \$15 an hour and regular schedules, was held at the East Greenbush store to bolster support for Smith. More than \$4,400 has been raised in a GoFundMe online campaign. OUR Walmart, the Capital District Area Labor Federation and others have launched an online petition to have Smith reinstated, which nearly 62,000 people have signed.

"Walmart has been getting away with mistreatment of workers for a long time," Smith told the *Militant* in a phone interview. "We need a union."

— Mindy Brudno

Framed-up rail workers win support

Continued from page 2

the facts the prosecution claims back up its charges."

Walsh said he will move for a separate trial for Harding. The continuous postponements in the case mean it's unlikely the trial will take place before the fall of 2016 or sometime in 2017, he said.

In a special pre-federal election autumn edition of the USW District 5 magazine *Métallo* (Steelworker) the union said the federal government bears responsibility for the Lac-Mégantic disaster. "Adding insult to injury," an article said, the government is trying to lay the blame on "two ordinary workers, members of USW Local 1976, who face serious criminal charges."

Solidarity messages for the Tom Harding and Richard Labrie defense

should be sent to their union, USW 1976 / Section locale 1976, 2360 De Lasalle, Suite 202, Montreal, QC H1V 2L1. Email: info@1976usw.ca. Copies should be sent to: Thomas Walsh, Lawyer, 165 Rue Wellington N. Suite 310, Sherbrooke, QC Canada J1H 5B9. Email: thomaspwalsh@hotmail.com

Contributions can be sent in Canada to Syndicat des Métallus, 565, boulevard Crémazie Est, bureau 5100, Montreal, QC H2M 2V8. In the U.S. checks can be sent to Tom Harding Defense Fund, First Niagara Bank, 25 McClellan Drive, Nassau, NY 12123.



Militant/Eric Simpson

Roachelle Logwood speaks to supporters at Dec. 3 rally outside Oakland, California, Walmart demanding her reinstatement. After protest management agreed to meet and discuss her job.

OAKLAND, Calif. — "I'm speaking out for all the employees inside," Roachelle Logwood told some 85 workers at a rally in front of the Walmart store here Dec. 3. Logwood said she was fired from her cashier job three weeks earlier for attendance issues, but decided to fight back with the support of co-workers and the labor movement.

Logwood introduced Josie Camacho, executive secretary-treasurer of the Alameda Labor Council, and California State Assemblyman Rob Bonta. The three then went into the store to demand Logwood's reinstatement while supporters chanted, "Bring back Roachelle!"

Management called the next day and scheduled a meeting the following week.

A few customers joined the protest, which was called by the United Food and Commercial Workers/Making Change at Walmart. Walmart workers from several Bay Area stores stood behind Logwood at the rally and some of her co-workers embraced her as Walmart security looked on.

UFCW Local 5 members from throughout the area turned out, along with organizers of fast-food workers from the East Bay Organizing Committee, members of Service Employees In-

ternational Union Local 1021, the Faith Alliance for a Moral Economy and the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance.

— Eric Simpson

Celebrate political life of Betsy McDonald



Militant/Nick Castle

Betsy McDonald, left, promoting Pathfinder books at 2013 fair, died Dec. 7 in Tucson, Arizona. She was a member of the Socialist Workers Party for more than 40 years. She was 95 years old.

A meeting to celebrate her life and political contributions will be held Sun., Dec. 13, in Los Angeles. For details or to send a message to the meeting, contact the Socialist Workers Party, 2826 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 1, Los Angeles, CA 90007. Email: swpla@att.net.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



December 21, 1990

Four days after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Washington began a brutal embargo against Iraq. Not even during the height of the war in Vietnam nor during the 1950-53 war against the people of Korea did Washington impose such a complete air, sea, and land blockade. This act amounts to a declaration of war against the people of Iraq and Kuwait and the hundreds of thousands from other countries who have been stranded there since the invasion.

The UN Security Council adopted a U.S.-backed resolution banning trade or any financial undertakings with Iraq or occupied Kuwait. Despite objections from representatives of the Cuban and Yemeni governments at the United Nations, Washington made sure the embargo included foodstuffs and medicines.



December 20, 1965

NEW YORK — E.D. Nixon, organizer of the Montgomery bus boycott, was guest of honor here Dec. 11 at a dinner celebrating the tenth anniversary of that historic civil rights struggle. It was sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum.

Farrell Dobbs, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, was toastmaster. Dobbs paid tribute to E. D. Nixon as "a pioneer leader in the freedom struggle in the South."

He told the audience: "This weekend in Montgomery, the tenth anniversary of the boycott is being celebrated. But unfortunately Mr. Nixon was not included in the program. We of the Militant Labor Forum felt that he should be included, that he before all others should be recognized as the pioneer, the founding leader, the initiator, the spark plug and principal man of the hour in the battle."



December 21, 1940

DETROIT, Dec. 16 — With 40 UAW-CIO organizers concentrating all their energies on a drive to organize the Ford Motor company, and with a union publicity campaign which has succeeded in hitting all the front pages, reports from reliable union sources indicate that Ford workers are joining the UAW by the thousands.

The UAW now has a great opportunity to break the notorious Ford open shop once and for all. Union sentiment is sweeping the ranks of Ford workers in a mighty wave. Ford has shown his anti-union policy again by refusing to consent to an NLRB vote.

A successful Ford drive would lead to a rebirth of union action in all auto plants, would pave the way to establishing the closed shop in auto as a whole.

Celebrate the political life of Priscilla March

62 years building the Socialist Workers Party

Saturday, December 19

Reception 3 p.m.
program 4 p.m.

The Village at Ed Gould Plaza
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Los Angeles

For more information contact the SWP in Los Angeles, Tel: (323) 643-4968. Messages can be sent by email to swpla@att.net or to 2826 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 1, Los Angeles, CA 90007.

Tatars blockade Crimea

Continued from front page

to protest Moscow's March 2014 occupation and annexation of the territory from Ukraine. Paramilitary forces from the Ukrainian nationalist Right Sector party have joined in its enforcement. The effects disproportionately hit working people, including tens of thousands of Tatars in Crimea. Many schools are closed, trolley buses can't run and 40 percent of residential buildings remained without heat as of Dec. 4.

The action began Sept. 20 with roadblocks stopping commercial trucks on the three highways that connect mainland Ukraine to Crimea. Mustafa Dzhemilev, the historic leader of the Tatars' fight for national rights and former political prisoner in the Soviet Union, laid out the protesters' immediate demands — Russian authorities must release Ukrainian and Tatar political prisoners, end political repression, investigate the murders of 22 Crimean Tatars on the peninsula and lift the ban on Dzhemilev and other Tatar leaders from returning to their homeland. The ultimate goal is "for the occupiers to leave our territory," he told the German news website Deutsche Welle.

Dzhemilev and Mejlis Chairman Refat Chubarov, both banned from Crimea, expressed frustration with Kiev's tacit acceptance of the Russian annexation as an accomplished fact. "The Crimean issue is getting forgotten" in international negotiations, Chubarov said Sept. 21.

The Nov. 20-21 explosions knocked out four electrical pylons in Ukraine's Kherson region, cutting off at least 70 percent of Crimea's power. No one has claimed responsibility, but the blockaders are preventing most repairs needed to restore electricity to the peninsula.

About 100 Ukrainian National Guard troops briefly clashed with those blocking access to the damaged towers, but then backed off. On Nov. 23 Kiev imposed a formal embargo on sale of goods from Ukraine to Crimea, after Dzhemilev and Chubarov, both of whom are members of parliament, met with President Petro Poroshenko.

Chubarov announced Dec. 6 that protesters would allow partial restoration of electricity to Crimea.

Moscow's takeover of Crimea

The Tatars are Crimea's native inhabitants who have suffered national oppression since the conquest of the peninsula by czarist Russia in 1783. After the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, the Tatars established an autonomous socialist republic in the newly formed Soviet Union, as did the Ukrainians. These

moves were backed by V.I. Lenin and the revolutionary Bolshevik leadership in Russia, who promoted Ukrainization and national rights for Tatars in Crimea. Use of native languages and culture flourished and national pride grew.

But in the late 1920s, a growing Soviet bureaucratic caste, led by Joseph Stalin, carried through a bloody counterrevolution against Lenin's policies, including trampling on national rights. During World War II, Stalin slandered the Tatars as Nazi collaborators and forcibly deported the entire population to Uzbekistan, Siberia and the Urals. Nearly half perished. Stalin encouraged Russification — transferring ethnic Russians to repopulate Crimea.

After the Soviet Union imploded at the opening of the 1990s, increasing numbers of Tatars returned to Crimea. By 2014 the Crimean population was about 12 percent Tatar, 25 percent Ukrainian, and 58 percent ethnic Russian.

When popular mobilizations overthrew Moscow-backed Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich in February 2014, Russian troops without insignia poured into Crimea, home to a naval base Russia leased from Ukraine. Within weeks a rigged referendum to secede from Ukraine and join the Russian Federation was pushed through using a mix of thuggery and propaganda that the new government in Kiev would take away rights of Russian speakers.

The overwhelming majority of Tatars opposed the annexation. Along with other opponents of Moscow's rule, they have faced harassment, arbitrary arrests, disappearances and murders. The only Crimean Tatar television station, ATR, was forced off the air in April when authorities refused to renew its license. Akhtem Chiyyoz, deputy head of the Tatar Mejlis, has been detained without trial since January.

In October Crimean Deputy Prime Minister Ruslan Balbek claimed Tatar leaders were recruiting for Islamic State, a slander Dzhemilev said "could not be further from the truth."

Toilers in Crimea feel squeeze

The higher food prices and extensive blackouts as a result of the blockade especially affect working people in Crimea. This comes on top of the impact of sanctions imposed by Washington and the European Union.

A Nov. 9 article in the *Kiev Post* inter-

Russian truck drivers protest crippling tax



Bobylev Sergei/TASS via ZUMA Press

Hundreds of long-haul truck drivers from across Russia have converged on Moscow to protest crippling new highway tolls that threaten their livelihood. Police stopped many from reaching the capital, but some made it onto the main beltway around the city Dec. 4, in what they call the "snail" — driving slowly and tying up traffic.

For weeks, convoys of truckers have held protests, from Dagestan to Novosibirsk in Russia's Far East, demanding cancellation of the 1.5-ruble-per-kilometer tax on trucks weighing more than 12 tons. Drivers say the tax, which took effect in mid-November, amounts to 10 percent of their income from each trip. It is scheduled to double next March. Adding insult to injury, the collection system has been turned over to a private company owned by the son of a close associate of President Vladimir Putin.

"We're protesting because we need to feed our families," Alexander Lushavin, one of the protest organizers, told the London *Telegraph* Nov. 30.

"They have already increased taxes on fuel and promised to cancel the transportation tax, but they have only increased it," Vladimir Deryugin told the *New York Times* as he and 20 other truckers sat in an Ikea parking lot near Moscow where police had blocked them in Dec. 4.

Drivers in Novosibirsk held up their underwear, saying the government is robbing them of everything.

The protests take place in the context of a deepening economic contraction, made worse by falling oil prices and the effects of sanctions by Washington and other imperialist powers against Moscow. "The drivers' protest is massive," said Pyotr Bizyukov of the Center for Social and Labor Rights in Moscow. He told the *Wall Street Journal* that protest activity in Russia hit a seven-year high in 2015.

— NAOMI CRAINE

viewed a resident of Crimea returning through a blockade checkpoint. Under Russian occupation "there's less freedom," said the woman, who did not give her name for fear of the Russian authorities. "My children aren't learning Ukrainian in school anymore."

As Right Sector troops searched her car, she complained to the reporter, "They think everyone in Crimea is a Russian terrorist!"

Sergei Psarev, a blogger from Yalta, Crimea, said the "energy blockade will only bring suffering" and turn Crimeans against Ukraine, reported Halya Coynash of the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group in a Nov. 22 article.

Russian officials and the military "have diesel generators," said Psarev, while "our small children will be ill and die."

Defending the tactic of maintaining the blackout, Dzhemilev told the *Kiev Post* Nov. 25 that "it's bad without electricity, but prison is worse," reiterating the demand for Moscow to release political prisoners. The Tatars in Crimea "are ready to suffer for some time to allow the pressure to take effect," he said.

"There can certainly be differing views regarding the sense, morality, etc. of the blockade and now the blackout," Coynash wrote in a Nov. 30 article, "but surely not about the totally reasonable demands made" by the Tatars.

Contraction in production grinds away on workers

Continued from front page

port factory goods fell to a five-year low in November.

The crisis is worldwide. Manufacturing in China, the world's second largest economy, fell to its lowest level in more than three years last month. In Brazil, the largest economy in Latin America, the gross domestic product fell by a record 4.5 percent in the third-quarter, "its worst recession since the Great Depression," reported the *Financial Times*. Bourgeois commentators had ballyhooed Brazil as a model "emerging economy" success story just a year ago.

Workers in the U.S. mining sector have been hard hit, as coal, iron ore and other mining bosses have eliminated 123,000 jobs this year. With plummeting oil prices, Schlumberger, the biggest

oil service company worldwide, has laid off more than 20,000 workers since January. Oil firm Baker Hughes has cut more than 16,000 jobs, and Halliburton some 18,000.

Big-box retailers are not immune. Macy's plans to close 35 to 40 stores next year, joining J.C. Penney Co. and Abercrombie & Fitch Co., who announced cutbacks earlier this year.

Increasing numbers of new jobs are being filled by temporary workers hired through contract agencies at lower pay and with few benefits. In addition, millions of people government statisticians list as being employed are workers who have had to settle for part-time hours. The number of workers whose hours were cut back or couldn't find a full-time job rose by 319,000 to 6.1 million

last month.

The labor force participation rate — the portion of the working-age population that is employed or on the unemployed rolls "actively" looking for work — was 62.5 percent in November, stuck at a 38-year low. More than 2 million additional workers have been unceremoniously eliminated from being counted as part of the workforce over the last year.

Declining take-home pay

While average wages have risen 2.3 percent this year, the government's core inflation rate eats most of this up, and it doesn't even include food and fuel costs. In the real world, workers can buy less today.

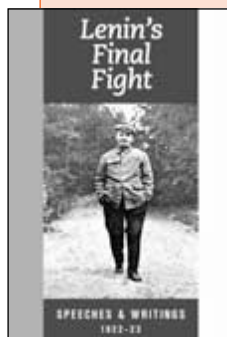
One area where higher wages are be-

Continued on page 7

Lenin's Final Fight

Speeches and Writings, 1922-23

by V.I. Lenin



How the central leader of the world's first socialist revolution waged a battle over whether that revolution, and the international movement it led, would remain on the proletarian course that had

brought workers to power in Russia in October 1917. — \$20

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Cuba demands end to hostile U.S. immigration policies

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Cuban government is rallying broad support for its policies on the right of its citizens to travel abroad, against Washington's "wet-foot, dry-foot" policy that encourages illegal immigration from the island, and in solidarity with opposition to U.S. imperialism's discriminatory treatment of immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean. Washington's policies, aimed at undermining the revolution, have left several thousand Cubans stranded in Costa Rica with the hope of emigrating illegally to the United States.

"These citizens are victims of the politicization of the migration issue on the part of the United States government," Cuba's Ministry of Foreign Relations said Nov. 18.

Washington's policy — "the only one of its kind in the world," the ministry notes — admits Cubans "immediately and automatically, regardless of the route or means used, even if they arrive in an illegal manner to U.S. territory." This is rationalized by the lie that Cubans are fleeing a dictatorship that bars them from leaving the island.

In fact, in January 2013 the Cuban government made it easier for the island's citizens to travel abroad. Since then almost a half million Cubans have visited the U.S., Mexico, Panama, Spain, Ecuador and elsewhere to visit family or work.

Despite the recent re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba, the daily *Granma* said Nov. 19, "The United States keeps alive the Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966; the wet-foot, dry-foot policies established by the government of Bill Clinton in 1995; and the so-called 'Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program,' put in place by George W. Bush in 2006"

that "complement the economic, financial and commercial blockade" of the island.

The 'American dream'

The number of Cubans "entering the United States started to take off since Dec. 17 last year, when Washington and Havana announced their intention of re-establishing bilateral relations," *Granma* said Nov. 20. Some Cubans worried that the change in relations could mean the end of the special treatment of Cubans and that the "door to the 'American dream' might be closed."

As a result, some 27,000 Cubans have crossed the Mexican border into the U.S. in the first nine months of this year, 78 percent more than the same period in 2014. The number arriving in the U.S. by sea doubled to 7,000.

More than 1,000 Cuban emigrants arrived in Costa Rica at the beginning of November, after using legal travel papers to visit other Latin American countries. Many passed through Ecuador, which at the time didn't require visas. The Ecuadorean government began requiring Cubans to apply for 90-day visas Dec. 1.

The Costa Rican government granted transit visas to Cubans arriving from Ecuador and other countries and proposed a "humanitarian corridor" from Nicaragua through Mexico to the U.S. border. In mid-November the Nicaraguan government refused entry to some 2,000 Cubans.

They are sleeping in churches, sports fields, and improvised shelters and receiving food and aid from local residents and aid organizations. According to the Costa Rican daily *La Nación*, the Cubans are chefs, bricklayers, engineers and many other professionals, including a handful of doctors. Many paid smugglers more



Top: Juventud Rebelde/Juvenal Balan

Cuba denounced Washington's policies of deporting immigrants from Latin America while enticing Cubans, including doctors serving internationalist missions, to leave for U.S., and won support from Central American governments. Above, Cuban doctor provides care for patients in Haiti. Inset, U.S. immigration raid.



than \$15,000 to make the trip. There are now nearly 4,000 Cubans at the border with Nicaragua.

Member nations of the Central American Integration System invited representatives of Cuba, Ecuador, Colombia and Mexico to attend their Nov. 24 meeting in El Salvador to discuss a solution to the problem.

Delegates agreed that Washington's policies discriminate against immigrants from throughout Latin American and the Caribbean while offering special inducements to get Cubans to leave. Rosario Murillo, coordinator of Nicaragua's Council of Communication and Citizenship, said that Central American governments should demand "humanitarian treatment of our migrants, who they keep labeling as second and third class."

The meeting decided unanimously to call on Washington to end its damaging policies toward Cuba and underlined each government's right to decide its own immigration policies and whether or not it would grant visas to the Cuban emigrants.

Cuban medical personnel

U.S. policy toward Cuban health workers aims to entice as many as possible to abandon the island or desert its internationalist health missions, dangling the possibility of getting rich from the skills they learned in Cuba.

In the first years after workers and farmers led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959, half of Cuban doctors, encouraged by Washington, left for the U.S., decimating the island's inadequate health system. The revolution responded by

building medical schools and training thousands of new doctors.

Cuba has sent health care workers to aid people around the world, including to help lead the fight against Ebola in Africa last year, and provides scholarships for thousands of students from other countries to be trained as doctors in Cuba.

"The Cuban health system is universal, free and accessible to the entire population in spite of the economic limitations that we face, that are aggravated" by the U.S. embargo, a Dec. 1 Cuban government statement points out.

While the overwhelming majority of doctors reject the U.S. bribery attempt — even though Cuban doctors earn less than \$100 a month, far less than they could make in the U.S. — enough have answered the siren call to impact Cuba's health care system. The Cuban government revised the travel regulations for doctors and other health workers starting Dec. 7.

"This does not mean that medical specialists can't travel or live abroad," the statement said. "But that their departure date from the country will be analyzed" to "allow for organization of the workforce to guarantee the accessibility, quality, continuity and stability of the functioning of health services."

The Cuban government said all those on the Nicaraguan border are welcome to return. In addition, health workers, including those who have abandoned internationalist missions, would be welcomed back to their former job or an equivalent one.

Contraction in production

Continued from page 6

ing won is among fast-food, Walmart and other retail workers, contract workers at many airlines and others fighting for \$15 an hour.

The bosses claim this will lead to higher prices. But wage increases instead cut into bosses' profits. "Wages Up, Prices Low," noted a Dec. 2 *New York Times* report on wage increases to workers at Shake Shack and other restaurants. "The behavior we're seeing out of major restaurant chains," the *Times* says, is a sign "that worker compensation will gain at the expense of corporate profits."

Years of government "stimulus" measures and the slashing of interest rates to nearly zero since 2008 — something Federal Reserve Bank officials say may end in light of recent economic news — have proven incapable of reversing the capitalist crisis. Declining profit margins mean bosses aren't investing in hiring workers and expanding productive capacity.

"Spending on mining and oil-field equipment fell 46% from a year earlier in the third quarter," reported the *Wall Street Journal*. "Outlays on railroad

equipment, to move the oil, fell even more sharply. Spending on farm tractors declined 42%."

Companies instead either sit on their money or, if they're less "risk averse," speculate in paper "assets" — from stocks to derivatives to hedge funds to bonds in every corner of the world.

Speculators seeking higher profits have invested trillions in stocks, bonds and government enterprises throughout semicolonial countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa. Corporate debt in these countries has risen fivefold over the past decade, totaling \$23.7 trillion in early 2015, much of which is unpayable. Defaults are threatened from Puerto Rico to Ukraine as almost \$600 billion of debt comes due next year.

Speculators face problems. Junk bonds "are headed for their first annual loss" since 2008, reported the *Journal*. Investors have ploughed \$1.3 trillion into these bonds, which yield high interest rates to offset the risky financial conditions of these companies. Energy junk bonds declined 14 percent this year and heavy industry by 15 percent, while buying these bonds in restaurants and gambling is up.

For further reading

Our History Is Still Being Written

The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution

by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, Moisés Sío Wong, Mary-Alice Waters

Also in Spanish, Chinese and Farsi \$20



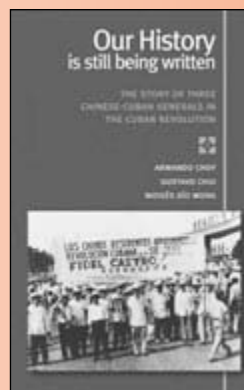
Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

The Cuban Revolution of 1959 set an example that socialist revolution is not only necessary — it can be made and defended.

Also in Spanish, French and Farsi

\$10



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‘The cause of the Algerian people is the cause of all free men’

Reprinted here is the “Declaration Concerning the Right of Insubordination in the Algerian War,” known as the “Manifesto of the 121.” It was drafted in 1960 by the surrealist group in France and signed by 121 artists, writers and intellectuals. It is contained in What is Surrealism? by André Breton, one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month in December. Breton (1896-1966), founder and leader of the surrealist movement, considered himself a revolutionary, a supporter of the Algerian struggle for independence and was a fierce opponent of both capitalist and Stalinist censorship of art.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

The Algerian Revolution of 1954-65 was one of the most powerful of the anti-colonial struggles that swept Asia and Africa after World War II, winning independence from brutal French rule and the establishment of a workers and farmers government, headed by Ahmed Ben Bella and the National Liberation Front. The manifesto was banned in France. It was published in English by the International Socialist Review, distributed by the Socialist Workers Party. Copyright © 1978. Reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.

An important movement is developing and spreading in France. It is necessary that the public, both here and



Demonstration in Algeria celebrates revolutionary overthrow of French colonial rule. “Manifesto of 121,” issued by French artists and intellectuals in 1960, “echoed like a thunder clap for us,” wrote Algerian revolutionary leader Ahmed Ben Bella from prison.

abroad, learn more about this movement at a time when the new turning point in the Algerian war must help us to see, rather than forget, the full extent of the crisis which began six years ago.

Increasing numbers of Frenchmen are being harassed, imprisoned and condemned for refusing to participate in this war, or perhaps for aiding Algerian fighters. Their reasons, which are misrepresented by their opponents and even glossed over by the very people whose duty it is to defend them, are generally misunderstood. But it is not enough to say that this resistance to public authority commands respect. This protest by men whose sense of honour and concept of truth are outraged — its meaning transcends the circumstances from which it arose. Whatever the outcome of events, it is important to recall it.

For the Algerians, the struggle, whether by military or diplomatic means, is unequivocal; it is a war of national independence. But what kind of war is it for the French? It is not a foreign war. French territory has never been threatened. More than that, this war is waged against men who the State pretends are French but who are fighting for the express purpose of ceasing to be French. It is not even sufficient to say that this is a war of conquest, an imperialist war accompanied by race prejudice. This is true of any war; the ambiguity persists.

Actually the State, by a decision which in itself is a fundamental abuse, has drafted the entire annual quota of

citizens into the military service for the sole purpose of waging what it has termed a police action against an oppressed people — a people whose only reason for revolting was a desire for fundamental dignity, a desire for recognition as an independent people.

The Algerian war — which is neither a war of conquest, nor a war of ‘national defence’, nor a civil war — has gradually become an operation belonging to and controlled by the army and a caste which refuses to give in to an uprising which even the civil authorities, recognising the collapse of colonial empires, seem willing to admit.

Today it is principally by the army’s insistence that this criminal, absurd struggle continues. This army, given a political role by several of its highest-ranking members, sometimes acting openly and violently in complete illegality, betraying the trust and purpose invested in it by the country, compromises and runs the risk of corrupting the nation itself by compelling citizens serving under its orders to become accomplices of factious or degrading operations. Is it necessary to recall that, fifteen years after the destruction of the Hitlerian order, French militarism, as a result of the demands of such a war, has succeeded in restoring torture and making it once again an institution in Europe?



These are the circumstances that have led many Frenchmen to reassess

the meaning of values and traditional obligations. What is civic responsibility when, in certain circumstances, it becomes shameful submission? Are there not instances when the refusal to serve is a sacred duty; when ‘treason’ means courageous respect for the truth? And when the army, by the will of those who use it as an instrument of racial or ideological domination, declares itself in a state of open or latent revolt against democratic institutions, does not the revolt against the army take on new meaning?

The question of conscience was raised as soon as the war began. As the war drags on, it is normal that the question of conscience should be resolved concretely by an increasing number of acts of insubordination and desertion, as well as protection and help to the Algerian fighters. Free movements have grown up outside the framework of any official parties, without their help and, finally, in spite of their disavowal. Once again, independently of any pre-existing groups or slogans, a resistance movement is born, by a spontaneous awakening; a movement that improvises its actions and methods of struggle in accordance with a new situation, the real meaning and demands of which the political groups and opinionated newspapers have tacitly agreed to ignore, either from apathy or doctrinal timidity or from nationalistic or moral prejudices.

The undersigned, considering that each person must speak out about actions which it is henceforth impossible to pass off as minor, isolated news items; considering that they themselves, working individually and according to their means, are bound to act, not to advise others who are faced with these grave problems and who must make their own decisions, but to ask those who judge them not to be deceived by the ambiguity of words and values, declare:

—We respect and consider justified the refusal to take arms against the Algerian people.

—We respect and consider justified the conduct of the Frenchmen who consider it their duty to help and protect the oppressed Algerians in the name of the French people.

—The cause of the Algerian people, who are making a decisive contribution to the destruction of the colonial system, is the cause of all free men.

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8

The Militant December 21, 2015

Fight cop brutality, defend free speech!

The fight against police violence and abuse has changed social relations in the United States. The ruling families have been forced to rein in their cops. More of those who kill or brutalize Blacks and others find themselves fired and on trial. Today’s victories, and the growing class unity that they advance, build on the historic victory of the Black-led proletarian mobilizations that overthrew Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and ’60s.

For more than a year Chicago cops and city officials tried to cover up the killing of Laquan McDonald by Officer Jason Van Dyke. But protesters, angry and undaunted, wouldn’t relent. As a result of the pressure Van Dyke has been charged with first-degree murder, the mayor has been forced to fire the police chief and damning videos of other cop killings have been made public.

Weeks of protests and a rebellion by African-American youth in Baltimore last spring led to charges against six cops involved in the death in custody of 25-year-old Freddie Gray. The first trial began Dec. 2.

There is less police violence today, and more attention and protest when it occurs.

The class character of the police — who maintain capitalist rule by brutality, intimidation and feeding workers into the criminal “justice” system — hasn’t changed. But our class has made gains, increasing its

strength, consciousness and unity.

Each victory expands confidence and fewer cover-ups are successful. Others are inspired to stand up — like the family of 19-year-old Zachary Hammond, shot to death by police in Seneca, South Carolina, and residents of Council, Idaho, where 62-year-old rancher Jack Yantis was killed by the cops.

Many on the left point to wider coverage of protests against police abuse to say racism and cop killings are increasing and that Caucasian workers are becoming more racist. They miseducate and mislead fighters seeking to understand the class struggle today and find the road to end the dictatorship of capital once and for all.

The demagoguery of leftists in the working-class movement and on campus, whose answer to those they disagree with is to shout them down, deal blows to open debate on politics and finding a road forward. Workers worldwide need political space to debate, protest and learn from each other’s experiences.

Glorifying the shouting down of those you disagree with is a deadly threat to the workers’ movement, whose history is replete with examples of groups — like Benito Mussolini in post-World War I Italy and the Larouchites in the 1970s — who, in times of sharp class conflict, were transformed out of the socialist movement to fascist thuggery.

Attacks on right to speak blow to working class

Continued from front page

assistant professor taking part in the protest, shouted, “Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here!”

Many liberals and leftist groups say — mistakenly — that racist attacks are growing like wildfire, and if free speech must be sacrificed to stop them, so be it. In fact, the mass proletarian movement of African-Americans and their allies in the 1950s and ’60s strengthened the working class and transformed the consciousness of workers of all nationalities. The fight against police brutality and killings over the last year and a half have forced the rulers to indict some cops and take steps to rein them in.

There are fewer, not more, racist attacks today. But because of the changes in social attitude wrought by struggle, they get more publicity and response.

Convinced of the opposite, the Ithaca College student government initiated a witch-hunt “Microaggressions Reporting System” in March, urging students to report “social exchanges in which verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities are committed that marginalize an individual(s) or specific group(s).”

When Cornell University student William Heisenberg posted on Facebook plans for a Nov. 13 action in solidarity with protests against racism at other colleges, he was accused of “microaggression” against “PoCs” (people of color). The Black Students United asked him to cancel the event because of “the lack of people of color in the planning and attendance of this protest,” and Mexican student group MEChA said he “perpetuates a white savior complex, placing the power to decide change in the hands of those not living our realities.”

The Yale University Intercultural Affairs Committee sent an email to students warning them not to wear a Halloween costume that “disrespects, alienates or ridicules segments of our population” and cautioning against “cultural appropriation and/or misrepresentation” — dressing as a person of a different race or culture.

When Yale lecturer Erika Christakis responded, warning that U.S. universities “have become places of censure and prohibition,” some Yale students organized angry protests demanding she resign, which she did Dec. 7.

Reject violence in workers movement

Censorship and thuggery are defended in a Nov. 16 editorial posted on the website of *Workers World*, the newspaper of the Workers World Party, which calls itself socialist.

Free speech is “racism” and “a tool the capitalist

ruling class uses as it propagandizes, organizes and legislates to keep all oppressed people — and emphatically people of color — silent and powerless,” the editors state.

“This world cannot be built using narrow legalities put in place by a bourgeois democratic revolution in the 1700s that framed ‘rights’ as possessed only by white, propertied men,” the editors write, tossing out the window constitutional protections won in blood by working people.

Far from being “narrow legalities” of a bygone era, the gains of the first American Revolution, including the successful fight led by workers and small shopkeepers for the Bill of Rights, written to protect the people from the state; and the second American Revolution, the Civil War, that abolished slavery, initiated Radical Reconstruction and codified emancipation, equal protection, citizenship and suffrage in the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to the U.S. Constitution are sorely needed for working-class struggles today. They aren’t just a concern of “dead white men” and “rightists,” as many on the left argue today.

Violence has no place in the working-class movement. Shouting down speakers, shutting down meetings or banning the expression of opinions you don’t agree with prevents the debate necessary to reach political clarity, build a mighty proletarian movement and fight for political power.

‘Operation Mop-Up’

In the 1970s the National Caucus of Labor Committees led by Lyndon LaRouche — which called itself socialist while on the road to becoming a fascist outfit — announced that groups in the workers’ movement it said were obstacles to the struggle needed to be eliminated. They launched what they called “Operation Mop-Up,” aiming to “pulverize” and “bury” the Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party. Armed with lead pipes, nunchucks and clubs, LaRouchite goons in 1973 attacked meetings the groups participated in and members walking home or to work.

The Socialist Workers Party organized a broad political campaign — and united-front defense squads — that beat the thugs back and brought their attacks to a halt.

Only by considering all ideas in an atmosphere of free debate and discussion can working people decide how to effectively oppose imperialism and war; fight for higher wages and unions; push back police violence; win affirmative action in hiring for African-Americans, women and all victims of discrimination; and build a labor party based on the unions.

Chicago protests

Continued from front page

tional previously suppressed videos. They show police using Tasers and brutally abusing Philip Coleman in a city jail, leading to his death, and the shooting of 25-year-old Ronald Johnson in 2014.

The protest, called by Rev. Jesse Jackson, president of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, and a number of Black church leaders, demanded: prosecution of all the cops at the scene of McDonald’s killing, appointment of a special prosecutor to replace Cook County State’s Attorney Anita Alvarez to prosecute Van Dyke, and a Justice Department investigation of the police department.

“We cannot trust the Chicago Police Department to investigate itself. Nor can we trust Anita Alvarez to prosecute herself. She is a person of interest in this,” Jackson said. “We’re going to continue dignified and disciplined non-violent protest until we see some action on these demands.”

Mayor Rahm Emanuel fired Police Chief Garry McCarthy Dec. 1 and then appointed a five-member “task force” on police accountability.

That day Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan announced she had “requested the U.S. Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division to initiate an investigation to determine whether practices by the Chicago Police Department violate the Constitution and federal law.”

The Justice Department announced Dec. 6 it would begin a “far-ranging” investigation into the Chicago cops, expected to last for months.

On Dec. 4, the city released the statements of the other cops on the scene when Van Dyke shot McDonald. All repeated the story Van Dyke fabricated to justify the shooting — that McDonald was walking toward him in a threatening manner — a story clearly contradicted by the video.

Significant numbers of Caucasians, Asians and Latinos joined the majority Black crowd at the march.

“I’m out here because I have a son and a daughter. I remember how the police treated me when I was coming up,” Greg Norris, an African-American respiratory therapist, told the *Militant*. “All the cops who were there and did nothing to render aid to Laquan and instead participated in the cover-up should be prosecuted. They are accessories to murder.”

“I’m here today for justice and to push for real accountability in policing,” said Brett O’Brien, a Caucasian teaching GED classes at the Cook County Jail. “You can’t stand by when you see an injustice done like what was done to Laquan. An injustice to one is an injustice to all.”

“It’s time for Black people and all who support us to take a stand. It’s what we had to do during the Civil Rights Movement,” said Willie Johnson, a retired cab driver. “I was involved in all kinds of actions in Baton Rouge [Louisiana]. I took part in the march from Bogalusa, where the Deacons for Defense were based, to Baton Rouge. We have to do it again.”

“This is the first protest I have been to,” computer programmer Robert Grider said. “I came because of the corruption and lack of accountability at City Hall. It is clear to me that the mayor covered this up to help win re-election.”

Speakers at the Thompson Center rally included representatives of the Service Employees International Union, Black Lives Matter Chicago, clergymen and state and city elected officials. “If we don’t get action on our demands we will march again next week,” Jackson said.

New videos swell protests

After months of fighting to keep the video of the killing of Ronald Johnson hidden, City Hall released the tape Dec. 7 showing Chicago cop George Hernandez shooting Johnson in the back as he was running away. County prosecutor Alvarez gave an hour-long press briefing concluding that she “could not establish beyond a reasonable doubt that the actions of officer Hernandez were not reasonable and permissible,” and said no charges would be filed.

“I’m not going to stop until I get what I want for him, and that’s justice,” Dorothy Holmes, Johnson’s mother, told the press after Alvarez’s announcement. Holmes has filed a lawsuit in the killing.

That evening protesters in Washington Park on the South Side where Johnson was killed demanded Hernandez be indicted.